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New conference hall for Theni

In lieu of a cramped room at the Collectorate



NEW FACILITY:Joint Commissioner (Revenue) V. Palanikumar, centre, inspecting a site for construction of a conference hall at the Theni Collectorate on Saturday.

Collector P. Muthuveeran, right, is seen.

THENI: Farmers and the public need not assemble inside a cramped meeting hall near the Collector's chamber to air their grievances and hand over the petitions in future as the district administration will soon have a spacious, well-lit and finely ventilated conference hall.

The state government had sanctioned Rs.2 crore for this purpose.

A new building with a ground floor and first floor will be constructed behind the old

meeting hall under the Part-II of a scheme. The total area of the building will be 1,155 square metres. The halls in both first and second floors together can accommodate 248 persons.

Joint Commissioner for Revenue Administration V. Palani Kumar, who visited the Collectorate on Saturday, approved the site proposed by the district administration and assured that the construction work would begin shortly.

Collector P. Muthuveeran, who accompanied him, said that more infrastructure development works would be taken up in the months to come for the convenience of public.

The district administration had sent a proposal in 2008-09 for construction of a spacious conference hall as the existing one was insufficient to conduct big conferences and meetings such as farmers' grievance day meeting.

The State government had also allotted funds for forest conservation, formation of demonstration plots, establishment of check-posts, afforestation programme, erection of monitoring towers, construction of check-dams, and construction of new buildings for schools under the Part II scheme.

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“Adopt efficient water management practices”

Farmers oriented on soil testing, seed processing and selection of agricultural crops.

“Deepening of tanks, desilting of irrigation channels are being taken up under the

NREG scheme.”

ARIYALUR: Farmers should adopt latest technology and efficient water management practices to achieve good yield in agricultural crops, said Collector T. Abraham here on Saturday.

Inaugurating the 'Aimperum Vizha' at Gangaikonda Chozhapuram organised by the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) for the benefit of the farmers of Ariyalur district to create awareness on soil testing, seed processing, selection of agricultural crops, raising of paddy under the system of rice intensification (SRI) method of cultivation and eradication of rodents in the fields, the Collector said that the district was a backward district and most of them depend only on agriculture.

Most of the farmers cultivate agricultural crops under rain-fed condition except in T. Pazhur and Tirmanur blocks where paddy is being cultivated under irrigated condition.

Mr Abraham pointed out that the agricultural labourers in the district were engaged in various development works under the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG) scheme and were being given work for 100 days.

Deepening of tanks, desilting of irrigation channels are being taken up under the NREG scheme, he said.

Radhakrishnan and Vijayakumar, Joint Director and Deputy Directors of Agriculture, Ariyalur, Senthamarai Manimaran, president of Gangaikondapuram panchayat and others spoke.

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'Conservation, key to water management'

COIMBATORE: As much as 85 per cent to 90 per cent of the total water is used for agriculture. Hence, when one speaks of water management, the focus is only on agriculture. Even if 10 per cent of water is saved, 14 million hectares will benefit additionally, says K. Palanisami, Director International Water Management Institute-TATA (IWMI-TATA) Policy Research Programme, Hyderabad.

Talking to Amutha Kannan on water management in general and also the IWMI-TATA Water Policy Research Programme (ITP), he said water management should be stressed at the tertiary level, i.e., at the farmer level, since the loss was maximum there.

“Though cultivation can be based on various kinds of irrigation, there is more scope for saving water in drip irrigation. Also, farmers have to discern the quality of water before they decide which crop to sow. This is very vital for the efficient use of water,” Mr. Palanisami said.

Though agriculture took up maximum quantum of water, it did not mean that water used for domestic purpose was not relevant in terms of being managed. “There is 45 per cent wastage in domestic use, mainly because of leakage during distribution. Also, misuse of water in terms of soft water being used for purposes other than drinking, leads to wastage. Simple recycling is possible. Awareness is required among people,” he said. The programme he worked for gave suggestions and recommendations to the Government on water resource management in India. It helped policy makers at the Centre, State, and local levels, to address water challenges by translating research findings into practical policy recommendations.

The programme, started in 2000, had been working on themes in phases and had so far given concrete solutions that the Government had adopted and implemented. The North Gujarat Initiative, the Central India Initiative, and the 'Jothigram' – the rural rewiring programme that involved electricity to be divided for the use of agriculture and other uses, were some of the success stories of the programme.

On the lines of the North Gujarat Initiative, the ITP had instituted the TNDRiP – Capacity building of farmers on drip technology – covering 100 villages and 1,000 farmers in Coimbatore and Erode districts. The programme is being executed in collaboration with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. Another interesting project in focus by the ITP for case study was the privatisation of water supply through public-private participation in Tirupur. If this was a success, it would be used as a model for other places too, Mr. Palanisami said.

A strong crusader for water management, he asserted that water conservation was the key. He also maintained that it was vital for improving the management of land and water resources for ensuring food safety, livelihoods, and sustainable environment.

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Farmers oriented on new pest threat

THANJAVUR: Bhakthavachalam Memorial Trust Krishi Vigyan Kendra (BMTKVK) at Sengipatti near here conducted a training programme for extension functionaries to create awareness about Coconut Leaf Beetle (*Brontispa longissima*), a new threat to coconut and other palms at the kendra recently.

The pest has caused severe damages to palms in few countries like Thailand,

Vietnam, Sumatra, Indonesia, etc. Even though this pest has not been noticed so far anywhere in India, there is every possibility to enter our country also. So to create awareness among coconut farmers and extension functionaries, the programme was conducted, said a press release issued here by the BMTKVK here on Sunday.

Ragunathan, Deputy Director of Agriculture, (Central schemes) Thanjavur, presided.

V.T.Senthil Kumar, Programme co-ordinator, C.Jaipal and K.P. Saravanan, working at BMTKVK explained the details of the new pest, its symptoms, control, and precaution measures.

P. Loganathan, Joint Director of Agriculture and 25 Assistant Agriculture Officers from various blocks of Thanjavur participated.

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Eight lakh saplings to be planted in private lands

Subsidy for beneficiaries who maintain the saplings

TIRUCHI: The Forest Department will plant eight lakh saplings in private lands in various forest divisions falling within the Tiruchi Circle under the Tree Cultivation in Private Lands Scheme (TCPL) in the current financial year with a view to enhancing tree cover outside forest areas.

The Department has set targets for each forest division specifying the number of casuarina saplings and saplings of timber species that needed to be planted in private lands across the Tiruchi Circle that encompasses Tiruchi, Perambalur, Pudukottai, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam Forest Divisions besides

Tiruchi Social Forestry Division.

The total number of saplings of timber species to be planted in Tiruchi Circle this fiscal is five lakhs, while it is 3 lakhs in the case of casuarinas. For the 2010-11 year, the Tiruchi Forest Division has been given a target to plant 1.70 lakh saplings of timber species; while the target for Perambalur Forest Division is to plant one lakh saplings of timber species.

Fifty per cent of the one lakh saplings to be planted in Pudukottai Forest Division will be casuarina. In Thanjavur Forest Division 60,000 saplings of timber species and 40,000 saplings of casuarina will be planted, while in Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam Forest Divisions, the number of casuarina saplings to be planted is 60,000 and 75,000 respectively. A total number of 30,000 timber species saplings would be planted each in Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam.

For the Tiruchi Social Forestry Division, the target for planting casuarina saplings is 75,000, while it is 60,000 saplings in respect of timber species. The forest divisions have been instructed to commence the preparatory works.

Officials here say saplings would be raised at the nurseries adding that the beneficiaries mainly small and marginal farmers would be identified under the TCPL scheme on whose holdings the saplings would be planted. In Tiruchi Forest Division alone, the saplings would be planted in over 300 hectares this year.

The Forest Department staff will do the pitting and planting works in the identified private lands, officials said adding that the scheme was being implemented since 2007-08 with a view to increasing tree cover outside forest areas and to meet the growing timber demand. Besides providing subsidy to the identified beneficiaries who are to maintain the saplings, the Department would provide incentives to them after ascertaining the survival rate of the saplings, a senior official said.



By Express News Service

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Milk producers to go on strike from today

CHENNAI: Milk distribution in the city is likely to be affected in the coming days as the Tamil Nadu Milk Producers Welfare Association has called for an indefinite strike from Monday to demand a hike in the procurement price. The State-owned Aavin procures 22.5 lakh litres of milk from the union every day, of which 12 lakh litres are being distributed in the city.

According to Rajendran, legal advisor of the association, milk producers attached to various unions across the State would participate in the strike, as the government was yet to listen to their grievances. He said, "We have been urging the administration to raise the procurement price of cow and buffalo milk by Rs 5 from the existing prices of Rs 15.54 and Rs 23 per litre respectively." However, no steps were taken to address this issue, which affects nearly 32 lakh families engaged in milk production in different parts of the State, he added. He also said the sector was facing crisis due the escalating price of cattle feed. When contacted Dairy Development Minister U Mathivanan told Express over phone that he had instructed all the district collectors to take necessary steps to tide over the crisis. Noting that the ruling DMK government had increased the procurement price every year since it came to power in 2006, he said, "Though there will be a marginal impact in the view of the strike, authorities are well prepared to handle it."

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, May 17

Max Min

38.6° | 28.6°

Rain: 00mm in24hrs Sunrise: 05:43

Humidity: 63% Sunset: 18:27

Wind: Normal Barometer: 1008.1mb

Tomorrow's Forecast



Tstorm

Tuesday, May 18

Max Min

36° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday

May 19



34° | 28°

Tstorm

Thursday

May 20



34° | 28°

Tstorm

Friday

May 21



33° | 27°

Tstorm

Saturday

May 22



32° | 27°

Tstorm

Sunday

May 23



33° | 27°

Tstorm